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Forest Service NEWS



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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOREST SERVICE/ELK FOUNDATION SIGN AGREEMENT

Wildlife, especially elk will benefit under an agreement signed between the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, J. Lamar Beasley, Deputy Chief of the Forest Service, said.

"The Forest Service manages seasonal and year-long habitat for more than 80 percent of the elk in the United States," Beasley said. "The future of this and other wildlife resources lies in closer ties with users like the Foundation." Under the agreement, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will provide money and volunteers to aid the Forest Service in maintaining and enhancing elk habitat on National Forest System lands and conducting research.

"By establishing a closer working relationship with the Foundation, we can accomplish the research and habitat improvements needed to increase and sustain elk populations on National Forest System lands," Beasley said.

"Elks are a valuable resource," Beasley said. "Habitat management that's beneficial for them is also beneficial for many other wildlife species."

Cooperative efforts by federal and state agencies with support from interested groups, such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, are responsible for the elks' comeback.

This cooperative approach has been followed successfully with Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, state fish and wildlife agencies and a number of other conservation groups, greatly expanding Forest Service efforts to manage wildlife and fisheries resources.

"By signing the agreement, we show our commitment to a strong partnership with the Foundation," Beasley added. "The Forest Service is enthusiastic about such cooperative efforts aimed at achieving mutually beneficial goals."

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